The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

U2's Bono Jokes About Medvedev's Taste in Music

By The Moscow Times

August 23, 2010



U2 will play in Russia for the first time Wednesday. Before that, they are set to meet with President Medvedev. **Mikko Stig**

Irish group U2 will fly down to Sochi to meet President Dmitry Medvedev on Tuesday, a day before their first concert in Russia.

The group is set to discuss their anti-poverty campaign Red with the president, although frontman Bono joked about canceling the meeting after hearing that Medvedev was a Deep Purple fan.

"What kind of music does he like? They say he is a Beatle-maniac ... Is that true?" Bono asked at a news conference late Sunday, national newspapers reported.

"That's it. I'm gone," Bono said, pretending to stand up and go when told by journalists that the president was a big Deep Purple fan. "I'm canceling the meeting."

At the same time, the rest of the group started humming the riff to "Smoke on the Water," the veteran rock group's most famous song, Kommersant reported.

"No, we prefer The Beatles," Bono said. "I think even Deep Purple prefers The Beatles."

When asked about U2's constant campaigning on various issues and the public's sometimes limited appetite for the group's causes, Bono said, "I understand the people who respond with, 'Shut up.'"

"I'm really good at rescuing cats from trees," bassist Adam Clayton noted at the time.

The group flew into Vnukovo-3, the state airport usually reserved for the government and official foreign guests, on Sunday evening together with their families.

"We want to go shopping, go to the popular places and the war memorials," Bono said in an interview on Ren-TV. "You're the lads who saved Europe. And I am proud that we are performing in front of such people. I have always liked the bravery of the Russian people."

The group headed for a news conference at the Kamin restaurant at Chistiye Prudy, where Bono tried to order a local beer. But when told the place had none, he drank a Guinness and flattered the home audience with the words, "We pretend that we are a great rock group, but as long as we had not played in Russia, that is not true."

Bono said his wife and children had gone to see the ballet, "Sleeping Beauty." Organizers said the group planned to visit the Tretyakov Gallery, Red Square, the Kremlin and Dasha Zhukova's modern art center, Garazh.

The U2 concert, part of their "360" tour, involves a circular stage that looks like a giant alien spider robot — and one of the largest sets in rock history. More than 200 trucks are needed to transport the set.

Part of the concert, Bono promised, will involved a linkup with the international space station and in particular with cosmonaut Roman Romanenko. The group previously spoke to him at a concert last year.

"He had such an amazing haircut," Bono said.

During the live linkup, Romanenko said: "I want to ask you see something. If you see David Gahan from Depeche Mode, say a big hello from me."

Local U2 fans who have been waiting for the group to come for more than two decades have prepared a green welcome for the group. "I bet all of us know that the green color and the shamrock are international symbols of Ireland. We in Russia want to welcome our favorite Irish band with these symbols and create a green shamrock field at the stadium for the opening U2 song," fan organizers wrote on the U2 fan site, U2.ru. "If you have seats or aren't planning to stand close, you are encouraged to just take something green with you and wave it from the moment [drummer] Larry [Mullen Jr.] appears on stage till the end of the first song."

Fans will have a party at Radio City near the Mayakovskaya metro station on Tuesday, the eve

of the concert.

U2 plays the Luzhniki stadium at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday. 24 Luzhnetskata Naberezhnaya. Metro Sportivnaya. Tel. 730-7300. Tickets cost 1,500 to 8,000 rubles. www.kassir.ru

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2010/08/23/u2s-bono-jokes-about-medvedevs-taste-in-music-a866